

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 25 to 43 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently amended) An information processing system for managing plural types of maintenance agreements relating to ~~an~~ image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, comprising:

~~an acquisition section for acquiring~~ a receiver that receives information of a number of printed paper sheets ~~from an~~ output by any one of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses via a communication path;

a memory ~~for storing that stores~~ a variety of charge amounts per paper sheet to be output by the each of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, in accordance with the types of maintenance agreements of a content of services by a serviceman of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, corresponding to each of the image forming apparatuses; and

a calculation section ~~for calculating that calculates~~ a payable amount on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets ~~acquired~~ received by said ~~acquisition section~~ receiver and (ii) a charge amount of the variety of charge amounts stored in said memory for in correspondence with the image forming apparatus from which the number of printed paper sheets is ~~acquired~~ received.

2. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein said memory stores a first charge amount per printed sheet in correspondence with an

agreement of a first type and a second charge amount per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second charge is an additional amount of the first charge and a predetermined amount.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 1, further comprising an acceptance input section ~~for accepting that inputs~~ an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through a window based upon information of an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculation section calculates the payable amount based upon (i) a charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction accepted input by said acceptance input section and (ii) the number of printed sheets ~~acquired~~ received by said ~~acquisition section~~ receiver.

5. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 4, further comprising a retrieval section for retrieving agreement information of a ~~most~~ suitable agreement based upon running information, based on the information of the number of paper sheets, of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, and

an information section ~~for informing that informs~~ a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval section.

6. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 1, further comprising a ~~second acceptance~~ an input section for ~~accepting that inputs~~ an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement ~~through a window~~ based upon information of an agreement instruction window and (ii) a period of the type of agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculation section calculates the payable amount in the instructed period ~~accepted input~~ input by said ~~second acceptance~~ input section based upon (i) a charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the type of agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is a number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

7. (Currently Amended) An information processing method of calculating a charge for use of ~~an~~ each of a plurality of image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses by a user, comprising the steps of:

~~acquiring~~ receiving information of a number of printed paper sheets ~~from an~~ output by any one of the image forming apparatus via a communication path;

storing a variety of charge amounts per paper sheet to be output by each of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, to a memory in accordance with the types of maintenance agreements of a content of services by a serviceman of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, corresponding to each of the image forming apparatuses; and

calculating a payable amount on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets ~~acquired~~ received by said ~~acquisition section~~ receiver and (ii) a charge amount of the variety of charge amounts stored in said memory for in correspondence with the image forming apparatus from which the number of printed paper sheets is ~~acquired~~ received.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, wherein said storing step stores a first charge amount per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a first type and a second charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second charge is an additional amount of the first charge and a predetermined amount.

9. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 7, further comprising an ~~accepting~~ inputting step of ~~accepting~~ inputting an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through a window based upon information of an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount based upon (i) as charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction ~~accepted~~ input in said ~~accepting~~ inputting step and (ii) the number of printed sheets ~~acquired~~ received in said ~~acquiring~~ receiving step.

10. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 9, further comprising:

a retrieving step of retrieving agreement information of a ~~most~~ suitable agreement based upon running information, based on the information of the number of paper sheets, of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses; and

an informing step of informing a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval step.

11. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 7, further comprising ~~a second-accepting~~ an inputting step for ~~accepting inputting~~ an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement ~~through a window based upon information of an agreement instruction window~~ and (ii) a period of the type of agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount in the instructed period ~~accepted input~~ by said second-accepting input step based upon (I) a charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is a number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

12. (Currently amended) A computer program stored on a computer-readable medium for calculating a charge for use of ~~an~~ each of a plurality of image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses by a user, comprising codes for the steps of:

~~acquiring~~ receiving information of a number of printed paper sheets ~~from an output by any one of the~~ image forming apparatus via a communication path;

storing a variety of charge amounts per paper sheet to be output by each of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, to a memory in accordance with the types of maintenance agreements of a content of services by a serviceman of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses, corresponding to each of the image forming apparatuses; and

calculating as payable amount on the basis of (i) the number of printed paper sheets ~~acquired~~ received by said ~~acquisition section~~ receiver and (ii) a charge amount

of the variety of charge amounts stored in said memory for in correspondence with the image forming apparatus from which the number of printed paper sheets is acquired received.

13. (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 12, wherein said storing step stores a first charge amount per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a first type and a second charge amount per printed sheet in correspondence with an agreement of a second type,

wherein the contents of services under each of the agreements of the first type and the second type differ from each other, and

wherein the amount of the second charge is an additional amount of the first charge and a predetermined amount.

14. (Currently amended) The program according to claim 12, further comprising a program code for a step of accepting inputting an instruction for instructing an agreement sent from an external computer, input through ~~a window based upon~~ information of an agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount based upon (i) a charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement instructed by the instruction accepted input in said accepting inputting step and (ii) the number of printed sheets acquired received in said acquiring receiving step.

15. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 12, further comprising:

program code for a step of retrieving agreement information of a most suitable agreement based upon running information of the image forming ~~apparatus~~ apparatuses based on the information of the number of paper sheets; and

program code for a step of informing a user of a result of retrieval by said retrieval step.

16. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 12, further comprising code for ~~a second-accepting~~ an inputting step for ~~accepting~~ inputting an instruction sent by an external computer for instructing (i) a type of agreement ~~through a window based upon information of an agreement instruction window~~ and (ii) a period of the type of agreement instruction window displayed by the external computer,

wherein said calculating step calculates the payable amount in the instructed period ~~accepted~~ input in said ~~second-accepting~~ input step based upon (i) a charge amount per printed sheet in accordance with the agreement in the instructed period and (ii) the number of printed sheets is the number of sheets printed during the instructed period.

17. to 43. (Canceled)